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A N

E P I C E D I U M

Sacred to the MEMORY of the

Late Rev^d Mr. *Thomas White*, M. A.Prebendary of *Litchfield*, Rector of *Stepney*,
and Minister of *Stratford Le Bow*.

Who Deceased Feb. 25, 1712.

A H! Rev'rend Friend, since Thou art gone, I'll try
How Grief can write; Tho' *Art* and *Wit* deny
Assistance, *Sorrow* in their Place shall fit,
And lead in gloomy Triumph *Art* and *Wit*;
From thy cold Tomb my Muse shall fetch her Fire,
Ev'n the dry Bones of Prophets can inspire.

When *Israel's* venerable Seer dy'd,
Complaints like ours were heard on ev'ry side;
Soon as the News in *Ramah's* Towns was spread
Their Clothes were rent, their Ashes on their Head;
But *Naioth's* sad Collegiates Sackcloth take
Next to their Skin for their great Founders sake.
So in our Grief the Prophets Sons should bear
(And so I hope they do) the greatest Share.
As from the Order Honour to him came,
So he reflected Honour on the same.

But his Dear *Sheep* alas! Ah! who shall keep,
Who feed and fold his dear beloved *Sheep*?

His

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Who bear the Lambs in's Bosom? who along
So gently, gently lead the Ewes with Young?
Who when the Solstice scorching Heat invades,
Shall seek them out cool and refreshing Shades?
Who saw the Venerable Mantle fall,
Ye sacred Tribe? O whom amongst you all
Has Heav'n accounted worthy to inherit
Ev'n but an equal Measure of his Spirit?
His Spirit mild and peaceable did prove
Its Inspiration from the Sacred Dove.
An Air of Goodness shin'd in's heavenly Face,
As in his Soul the Radiant Beams of Grace.
And now He shines in Choirs of Seraphs bright,
And Cherubs wing'd, an undistinguish'd Light.
Where surely He no Stranger did appear,
Having kept constant Correspondence there.
But here His Soul my Opticks cannot view
Until like Him I am all Spirit too.
Therefore O Muse descend, and if you can,
Leaving the Saint triumphant, view the Man.
Methinks I see that sweet and Heav'nly Look,
Vertues clear Glass, Religion's living Book;
Methinks I hear transported that sweet Voice
Uttering Divine, Unutterable Joys.
His Eloquence, when Heav'n was the Theme
Flow'd clear and rapid as Euphrates Stream;
Methinks I feel the Warmth he us'd to impart
Playing in Lambent Flames about my Heart.
Within his Breast did all the Vertues meet,
And their Twin Sisters all the Graces greet.
Where join'd together in a close Embrace,
'Twas hard to know a Vertue from a Grace.
For mixing Beams, before distinctly bright,
They seem'd but one great and refulgent Light;
So in one Jewel many Diamonds blaze,
And seem but one, mingling promiscuous Rays.
That He was Learn'd all but himself did know,
Bright Nat'ral Parts He had, but thought not so.
Whilst he was teaching you might oft discern
He was so modest He would seem to learn.

His

His Eloquence was Solid, Nervous, Plain,
 Never affected, Popular, nor vain ;
 With *Scripture Panoply*, not *Rules of Art*,
 H' assail'd and storm'd the Fortres of the *Heart*.

His Wit surprizing, neat, genteel, and clean,
 Of which his Judgment always held the Rein.
 His shining Judgment perfected by Grace
 Seem'd in degree what *Aaron's Breast-plate* was,
 Reflecting pointed Rays of Heav'nly Light,
 Divinely teaching, as Divinely Bright.
 Sober and pious, meek and mild was he,
 Of Wisdom full, full of Simplicity.
 Patient to suffer, and to Do discreet,
 In Counsel grave, in Conversation sweet.
 Free from all Censure, Flatt'ry, Strife and Guile,
 His Thoughts, Words, Deeds, were *Terms convertible*.

In all Relations (for he understood
 What each requir'd) he labour'd to do good.
 A common Blessing he, which, like the Sun,
 None cou'd pretend t' engross, or call his own.
 A sweet Companion, and a Loving Spouse,
 To Kindred kind, to Strangers courteous.
 His Friends he serv'd with Faithfulness and Care,
 Officious to do Good as *Guardian Angels* are.
 His Enemies he lov'd, but scarce did know
 Whether they were his Enemies or no.
 As from all Wrong, from all Suspicion clear,
 Conscious of Good alone, he knew not how to fear.

A constant Lab'rer in God's Vineyard he,
 Full of *Good Works*, full of *Humility*,
 Him Zeal for God's own House, and God's own Truth,
 Had eat and wasted from his tender Youth.
 He never ceas'd to watch, and preach, and pray,
 Till he had watch'd and preach'd and pray'd his Life away.
 And now, where many Years he blest the Bread,
 Prone, he reclines his Rev'rend aged Head.

Alas ! Our Glory is departed now,
 Nor Pray'rs nor Tears cou'd stop the fatal Blow.
 Imperious Death both must, and will b' obey'd,
 Tho' Vows as warm as reeking Incense plead.

He's

He's gone, we left his Exit to bemoan,
 He's gone, and all our Joys with him are gone.
 And yet, O Death, thou hast no Cause to boast,
 By thee he gains, we, we alone have lost.
 Our *Rev'rend Pastor* knew thou hadst no Sting,
 And wert at most a *spightful harmless* thing.
 He lives in Realms of Bliss triumphant, where
 Thy meager Face ne'er did, nor dares appear.
 And tho' perhaps this worthless Verse of mine
 Cannot to Immortality consign
 His pious Memory, yet spite of thee
 I'm well assur'd it will immortal be.
 Whilst Learning and Religion's self can give
 Life to their Vot'ries, his Renown shall live.
 Succeeding Poets to the Trump of Fame,
 That to the Gen'ral Trump shall give his Name.
 But thou insult'st ov'r us--Know, Coward, know,
 W' are not without this Comfort in our Woe,
 Thy Conqueror has promis'd to provide
 Successive Shepherds his dear Flock to guide.

And You his *Widow* and *Relations* grieve
 No more for what you never can retrieve.
 Why are you cloth'd in Garments *black* as Night,
 When he is clad in Vesture shining *White*?
 Why from your streaming Eyes do's briny Rain
 Show'r down, when he shall never weep again?
 Why from your heaving Breast do Sighs arise?
 You can't inspire new Life with all your Sighs.
 Better reserve them for your Closet, where
 They'll be of Use to wing your speedy Pray'r.
 Cease then, O cease, as without Hope to mourn;
 For you shall go to him, he never will return.

F I N I S